

# The Landscape Photography Zine

A landscape photograph capturing a serene sunset over a calm body of water. The sky is a vibrant mix of orange, red, and purple, with soft clouds catching the low light. The water's surface is still, acting as a perfect mirror for the colorful sky above. In the foreground, a bright red canoe with a white geometric logo on its bow is pulled up onto a grassy bank. The canoe's interior is a light tan color, and a blue paddle with a yellow logo is tucked inside. The surrounding vegetation consists of tall green grasses and shrubs, some of which are reflected in the water. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

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## Camera Gear

Equipment matters in photography ([except when it doesn't](#)), but you shouldn't get hung up on gear, especially if the gear you have works. Buy it right the first time or end up buying it twice or three times.

**Camera:** 36+mp, full frame, latest generation sensor. Get a backup camera, too.

**Lenses** (Divide the mm by 1.5 if you saved cash and bought APS-C.)

- ✓ **Wide Angle:** When considering a camera system, seriously consider a system that offers an excellent 16-35mm f/2.8 lens that takes filters. For landscape and nightscapes this could be the only lens you need. There are ways around this, but they require buying more lenses in the end.
- ✓ **Telephoto:** A 70-200mm (or 300mm) is helpful.
- ✓ **Extras:** 150-600 for wildlife. 105mm for macro. 24-105 for carrying around. 20 f/1.4 and 35 f/1.4 for night.

**Extra gear:** Remote release cord, extra batteries (especially in winter), extension tubes for macro.

## Filters

Filters help overcome the dynamic range limitation, so you can capture detail in the sky and ground at sunrise and sunset. They can modify the speed of motion, change the look of the image, and remove reflections and intensify colors to make it look closer to what your eyes saw.

- ✓ **Basic Kit:** 3-stop Reverse ND Grad, 2-stop Soft ND Grad, LB Neutral Polarizer, Singh-Ray Bryan Hansel Waterfall Polarizer, 5-stop Mor-Slo
- ✓ **Got cash?** 2-stop Reverse ND Grad, 3-stop Soft ND Grad, 10-stop Mor-Slo, Astro Vison, supersecret filter that is coming out soon



Buy the polarizers in 82mm thin mounts and using step-up rings to make them work with all your lenses.

You'll need a filter holder and adapter ring for each filter thread size your lenses have. There is no perfect filter holder but avoid Cokin.

**Save 10% by using the code “thathansel” when you buy direct from [singh-ray.com](http://singh-ray.com).**

## Using Filters

Rotate the polarizer until you see the reflections disappear. Some people see this as rocks or leaves, especially when wet, turning darker. Some people see the scene as getting more saturated.

For split ND grads, place the split on the horizon to hide it. Spin the filter holder back and forth as you look at the viewfinder to see where the split is pivoting. Compare the pivot point to the horizon and move it until it is on the horizon. If the horizon is flat, use a reverse ND grad. If the horizon is jagged, use a soft ND grad.

## Tripods

- ✓ **Rule:** Don't trust a \$99 tripod to hold your \$1,500 to \$3,000+ camera and lens combo. Buy it right the first time or buy it right on the 3<sup>rd</sup> go.

**Ball heads** are easier to use than pan/tilt heads. Kirk and RRS make excellent ball heads in the USA. Pick up an L-bracket. You probably don't need the biggest ball head unless using heavy lenses – especially true when using an L-bracket.

**Carbon legs** are lighter but expensive. Maybe don't spend the \$150 to \$200 on aluminum legs if you think you'll buy carbon eventually. Just buy carbon. Use center columns as a last resort and never in the wind. Better yet, don't get a center column. That allows you to get your tripod right down at ground level for macro.



## Planning

Light is everything in photography. The best light is about an hour before sunrise and sunset until about an hour after. Overcast days are great for waterfalls. Rain is awesome, especially during fall color. Shoot fog, snow, and bad weather! At sunrise and sunset, put yourself under the clouds with a clear horizon.

- ✓ Get the app **PhotoPills** for your phone and learn how to use it to predict sunrise and sunset.

Scout! Spend the bad light scouting for good light. Keep notes. Guess what conditions will work at a location. Figure out when shade will cover an area, so on clear days you can shoot waterfalls and macro.

## Composition

**Simplicity:** Make the simplest composition that represents the area. Then add one or two of these elements: **shapes, lines, patterns, texture, or color.**

**Flow:** Compose to make the viewer's eyes follow the route you want them to follow. Use **visual weight** to


balance the shot left to right and to move the viewer's eyes. Visual weight attracts your eyes. If your eyes go there, it has visual weight.

**Relationships:** Build relationships between different parts of your photo. The more relationships you have, the stronger the photo.

In **near/far composition**, you combine a cool foreground at your feet with a cool background, such as an awesome sunset. The middle of the shot relates the foreground to the background.

Look for shapes or lines at your feet. Then get your camera right over it. Tilt your camera down towards the foreground to include limited sky unless it's exploding with color. Blue sky at sunset is boring, so don't include blue sky. Seriously, **you aren't close enough to your foreground.** Get closer and go wide. Your tripod feet should be just outside the frame of your shot. Seriously, get closer.

- ✓ Pack **extra water and food.** Sometimes you won't want to go back to town.



Not nearly everything  
you need to know about  
landscape photography  
in a small pithy zine.